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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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EAST DUBLIN RENDERING PLANT INDICTED FOR CLEAN WATER ACT VIOLATIONS

SAVANNAH: Rick Thompson, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia, announced today that the federal grand jury sitting in Savannah, Georgia, has returned an indictment charging Griffin Industries, Inc., Thomas A. (Tommy) Griffin, Ricky A. Elrod, Douglas J. Spritzky, Gregory E. Oxley and Steven Kelly Horne with conspiracy to violate the Clean Water Act and five counts of discharging pollutants into U.S. waters, in violation of the Clean Water Act. The Indictment charges that between September 1999 and July 2003, the defendants, all present or former employees and corporate officials of Griffin Industries, along with others not named in the indictment, engaged in a conspiracy to operate Griffin Industries' rendering plant in East Dublin, Georgia, in a manner that caused pollutants to be discharged into Bay Branch Creek, a tributary of Big Creek and the Oconee River.

The indictment also alleges that the defendants caused discharges of pollutants into Bay Branch Creek from the East Dublin plant site on five separate occasions in late 2002 and early 2003.

The maximum penalty for the conspiracy charge is 5 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 for the individuals charged and a fine of \$500,000 for the corporation. The maximum penalty for the Clean Water Act charges is 3 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 for each count for the individuals, and a fine of \$500,000 for the corporation.

Thompson stressed that an indictment is only an accusation and is not evidence of guilt. The defendants are entitled to a fair trial, in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Criminal Investigation Division, with assistance of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division. The government is represented by Assistant United States Attorney Jeffrey J. Buerstatte and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Teresa Mann.

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